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December 19, 2003

The Honorable Lawrence Eagleburger
Chairman, International Commission on
Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims
1300 L Street, NW, Suite 1150
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Chairman,

We are writing regarding the December 31, 2003, deadline established by the International Commission on Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) for Holocaust survivors and their heirs to submit claims for insurance policies held during the Holocaust era. We are concerned that such a deadline could foreclose legitimate claims by Holocaust survivors and their families.

As you know, over the course of the last two years, the Committee on Government Reform has conducted several oversight hearings to examine efforts to ensure efficient and appropriate resolution of Holocaust-era insurance claims. One issue we have focused on is the absence of a comprehensive list of policyholder names that survivors and their heirs could use to verify the existence of a family policy. This absence of such a list is still a serious problem.

The insurance companies participating in the ICHEIC process have been slow to produce policyholder information. Furthermore, while the German companies made an extensive effort in April, 2003, to publish a large list of policies sold in Germany, it is unclear whether they have met their responsibility to publish a list of all policies issued outside of Germany, as required in Annex H paragraph (II)(3) of the ICHEIC agreement with the German insurance association.

In addition, at the Committee's most recent hearing on September 16, 2003, your testimony, as well as testimony from the State Department, the Conference on Materials Claims Against Germany, and other experts highlighted the need for access to Eastern European archives to help make available more policyholder information. We have recently sent letters urging the governments of Austria, Poland, and Romania to make their archives available to ICHEIC researchers. Copies of these letters are enclosed for your review. It is troubling that the ICHEIC claims process could be closed before that research is complete.

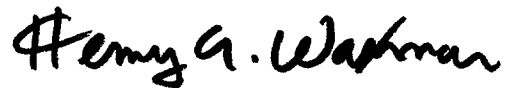
The Honorable Lawrence Eagleburger
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We understand that ICHEIC will continue to process claims after the December 31, 2003, deadline. We also understand that ICHEIC must wind up its operations at some point. However, we cannot understand why ICHEIC will not accept new claims after the end of this year especially since every effort to obtain policyholder information has not been exhausted. We therefore respectfully urge you to re-evaluate the December 31, 2003, deadline, taking into consideration the need for a comprehensive list of policyholder names created from company and government archives. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Randy Kaplan with Chairman Davis' staff at 202-225-5074 or Michelle Ash with Ranking Minority Member Waxman's staff at 202-225-5051.

Sincerely,



Tom Davis
Chairman



Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member

Enclosures